

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING HELENA LOCAL AND MONTANA SENATE AIDE WITT WILLIAMS FOR HIS OUTSTANDING PUBLIC SERVICE AND EXAMPLE ON BEHALF OF THE DEAF COMMUNITY

HON. MATTHEW M. ROSENDALE, SR.

OF MONTANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 29, 2023

Mr. ROSENDALE. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to honor an outstanding public servant and brilliant young man who refuses to let his disability limit his potential.

Witt Williams is a Helena, Montana native whose parents received the difficult news that their son was born deaf and would likely finish high school reading at a 4th-grade level. Unwilling to accept the limitations of his condition, Witt worked tirelessly with his mother, Wendy, to ensure that he kept up with his hearing peers.

Witt excelled as a student-athlete while attending Helena High, competing on the varsity tennis team and the Great Divide Ski Team, where he placed in the Slalom at the Winter Deaflympics. Witt further distinguished himself in extracurriculars by representing his school at the Montana Behavior Initiative Leadership Conference.

Witt Williams defied the odds that often befall those who are hearing impaired and graduated from Montana State University last spring with a degree in Exercise Science/Kinesiology. His success is all the more impressive considering that he accomplished all this while maintaining a grade point average of 3.75 and graduating with high honors.

Witt currently works for the Montana State Legislature as a Majority Aide. Like any good Montana man, he also has interests outside the legislature and works as a ski racing coach at Great Divide Ski Area and serves as the varsity tennis coach for Helena High School.

I want to commend Witt for his dedicated work in the legislature and in his local community. Witt Williams is an example for all Montanans to follow, and it is my privilege to acknowledge his contributions in the United States House of Representatives.

TRIBUTE TO WALTER DUKES AND SETON HALL'S 1953 NIT CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. DONALD M. PAYNE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 29, 2023

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Walter Dukes and the 1953 Seton Hall University National Invitational Tournament (NIT) Championship team. It was ex-

actly 70 years ago that Dukes led the Seton Hall Pirates to the NIT championship. It was a remarkable achievement for Dukes and his teammates, who fought racism and segregation during their historic championship season.

Walter Dukes was Seton Hall's seven-foot tall, African-American center during that magical 1952–53 season. Like most championship teams, the 1952–53 Seton Hall was well-coached with strong players at every position. The Pirates won 31 games that season and lost only two games. They remain the only New Jersey college basketball team to have won a national tournament championship. Dukes was their indisputable leader who pulled down a remarkable 734 rebounds that year, an NCAA Division 1 record that still stands.

Yet, many college basketball fans didn't approve of his presence on a basketball court dominated by white players. At the time, *Life Magazine* wrote about the experience for Dukes and the Seton Hall Pirates under the headline: ROUGH GAME. ROUGHER SEQUEL. In a four-page article, the magazine memorialized one of the ugliest, race-related moments in college basketball history— an angry mob attacking Dukes and his teammates following a loss against the University of Louisville Cardinals.

At the end of the 1952–53 regular season, the Pirates chose the NIT instead of the NCAA Tournament in order to avenge their loss to Louisville. Unfortunately, they never had that opportunity as Louisville was eliminated from the tournament. But, the Seton Hall Pirates continued to win and beat St. John's University, 58–46, to win the 1953 NIT title. Walter Dukes, Seton Hall's star center, was named NIT Most Valuable Player.

Walter Dukes continued to play basketball professionally for a few years with the Harlem Globetrotters and then in the National Basketball Association (NBA) with the New York Knicks, Minneapolis (now Los Angeles) Lakers, and the Detroit Pistons. After his basketball career, Dukes became a civil rights lawyer to protect the rights of African Americans. He died in 2001 of natural causes at the age of 70.

Walter Dukes and his Seton Hall teammates are legends in New Jersey and college basketball lore. They are a team that should inspire all of us for their courage as they battled racism in their pursuit of a championship. Their 1952–53 championship season bears witness to the importance of character and faith to success.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF MR. BOB BELL

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 29, 2023

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and lasting contributions of

Mr. Robert "Bob" Bell. Passing away at the age of 82, Mr. Bell leaves behind an indelible legacy of service to his country and the Winters community.

Born in Missouri in 1940, Mr. Bell spent his early years learning to play the piano, trumpet, and bass, cultivating what would become a lifelong love for music. His passion for the arts continued into adulthood and he played the bass for over 60 years.

After graduating from high school, Mr. Bell joined the Air Force, bravely serving our country in Europe and Southeast Asia. Regardless of where he was stationed, Mr. Bell found opportunities to continue practicing music and played in jazz groups around the world, bringing joy and laughter to international audiences.

Following his service in the Air Force, Mr. Bell joined Golden 1 Credit Union, beginning a three-decade-long career strengthening the financial well-being of California residents. Mr. Bell's financial expertise and knowledge of economic planning significantly advanced the expansion and success of Golden 1 Credit Union. His crucial contributions and indispensable leadership played a vital role in helping Golden 1 Credit Union open 63 new branches and foster the financial stability of tens of thousands of Californians.

Mr. Bell's commitment to California was not only expressed through his tenure with Golden 1 Credit Union, but also through his public service to the City of Winters. He served on the Winters Fire Department Commissioner Board for 16 years, working tirelessly to prepare Winters for any emergency and ensure the health and safety of all Winters residents. Mr. Bell also served on the Winters Senior Foundation Board, valiantly advocating for seniors and playing an instrumental role in enhancing the quality of life for Winters seniors.

In addition to his community leadership, Mr. Bell also exemplified the spirit of altruism and innovation in all areas of his life. For 30 years, Mr. Bell was an active member of the Kiwanis Club of Greater Davis, significantly advancing efforts to identify and address unmet needs in the Yolo County community. His vital work serving his community has helped provide the resources and services necessary to allow all Yolo County residents to thrive.

Mr. Bell will be remembered not only for his decades of service to the Winters community, but also for his genuine spirit of kindness and compassion. He impacted the lives of countless members of his community and his steadfast leadership, constant smile, and patient mentorship undeniably enhanced the lives of his fellow Yolo County residents.

Mr. Bell's enduring spirit will live on in his wife, three children, 10 grandchildren, and the community he dedicated his life to serving. I would like to extend my deepest sympathies to Mr. Bell's loved ones. I know that they, along with the people of Yolo County, join me in celebrating his life and legacy.

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